

# LOS ANGELES COUNTY VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

2615 S. GRAND AVE., SUITE 100  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90007



United We Stand



Joseph N. Smith  
Director

## MINUTES REGULAR MEETING Wednesday, June 13, 2012

### Present:

### Absent:

#### Commissioners

Bob Archuleta, Chair  
Dave Culmer  
Stephanie Stone  
Steve Rosmarin

#### Commissioners

Carvel Gay, Vice Chair  
Fred Flores  
Mark MacCarley  
Ramon Rodriguez

### County Department

#### Military and Veterans Affairs

Tatiana Rosas, Executive Secretary

#### Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Approval of Minutes

Chair Bob Archuleta called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m., and welcomed everyone for coming to today's meeting. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Dave Culmer and due to a lack of a quorum, only four Commissioners present; the approval of minutes was postponed.

#### Roll Call

As noted above.

#### Chairman's Report

Chair Archuleta stated we just had Memorial Day and hopes that everyone had an opportunity to honor our veterans by attending an events or the various festivities that were scheduled throughout the County.

Happy 237<sup>th</sup> Birthday Army! Chair reported that he met with Gen. Raymond Odiero, who stated, everything that can be done is being done to take care of the troops.

He stated that this Commission's mission is to disseminate information to the County Board of Supervisors. The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs alleviates the pressure the VA has everyday. Commissioner Culmer works in Westwood and deals with veteran issues on a daily basis. He asked that everyone to participate and reach out to our veterans. It is expected that 600,000 will be returning.

On a personal note, one of his son's is in Afghanistan and hoping he returns home safe; the other finished Jump school and is in Texas at a Master's program, both are West Point graduates.

#### Comments from Audience (three minutes each)

John Bartos, Assistant Adjutant, Los Angeles County Council (LACC), American Legion, distributed copies of correspondence that was sent to the County Board of Supervisors referencing their space in Bob Hope Patriotic

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Hall. The essence of the letters is that LACC is requesting the Board of Supervisors have Jan Takata, CEO's Office, to meet with a group of LACC officers in July to resolve the LACC space issue.

Peter Bernard, Police Post 381, has been a member of the American Legion for 60 years. Mr. Bernard stated that there was a letter sent to Supervisor Antonovich requesting that Post 381 return to Bob Hope Patriotic Hall. He stated he didn't want to have to take legal action but he would do what needed to be done to protect the Post and moving into the Basement is unacceptable.

Jeanine Gilmaher, Meditation Coach, Forward Step, is looking for departments and agencies to help veterans adjust to returning to civilian life. They are developing a program and a pilot program on dealing with PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder); cost to the families and what a veteran has to face with PTSD.

Commissioner Stone inquired if there is a course for female veterans and Ms. Gilmaher responded that the course addresses both genders and trainings would be gender appropriate.

Hugh Crooks, Jr., Commander, American Legion, member of Post 8, stated that when Bob Hope Patriotic Hall opened Post 8 was on the 8<sup>th</sup> Floor as tenants and said they would temporarily suspend their operations while the building is being refurbished. "We feel the County of Los Angeles has a legal obligation to put us back where we started; if not done, we'll have media and litigation. It's been said our office is going to be part of Mental Health and our office is being turned into a storage room."

Jonathan James Barnes, Co-founder of Serene Haven, is a non-profit housing program for veterans. Mr. Barnes stated they've been in operation for 2 months. He extended an invitation to the Commission and those present to tour their site.

Jay Morales, retired Marine, Vietnam Veteran and Adjutant, American Legion, 17th District, Los Angeles Post No. 8, is requesting an open Public Hearing to discuss future space at Bob Hope Patriotic Hall. Room 800 was designated by the founding members of the American Legion in 1925 for Post 8, the last charter tenant at a veteran memorial hall. He stated it is imperative that they move back to the exact location where they started because they are the last charter tenant.

Commissioner Stone asked for clarification of the law being quoted and distributed to the Commissioners by Jay Morales and asked if County Counsel could clarify the law.

Commissioner Culmer asked if anyone aside from Colonel Joseph Smith knew what the agreement is and what veteran groups are going back into the basement.

Chair Archuleta stated that we all have a common goal and that is to keep the spirit of patriotism alive. Many veteran organizations will come under one roof at Patriotic Hall to serve veterans. We are blessed to have Colonel Smith, his heart is in the right place; he is equal and fair. When he returns we will get clarifications.

### **Veterans Home Support Committee – Steve Rosmarin**

Commissioner Steve Rosmarin stated that they are still working on the paperwork to process the 501©3 form. He also reported the Jon Voight was the emcee at the Memorial Day ceremony and spent over 2 hours at the West LA Home visiting with the veterans.

The Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles' Veterans in Arts Program, which has been approved by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will be launching the program in the Japanese Gardens on the grounds of the West Los Angeles VA in July. More than 40% of the summer workforce is comprised of veterans. They are offering free tickets to active military, veterans, and their guests for each performance. In order to describe the program in more detail they have invited the Commission to a luncheon in mid-June. The luncheons will be at the following locations and times:

June 18 @ 12 p.m. at the Cheesecake Factory in Pasadena

June 19 @ 12 p.m. in the San Fernando Valley

June 20 @ 11:30 a.m. at the Cheesecake Factory in Brentwood, West L.A.

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Also, a flyer is in each of the Commissioners packets.

Jeanne Bonfilio, Public Information Officer, stated that at the Dodgers vs. Angels game Bea Cohen, California's oldest living (102-year-old) female WWII Veteran was honored by being invited to through the first pitch. She also encouraged anyone interested in helping the Home be a part of the Home Support Committee.

**Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Report – Colonel Joseph Smith**

Chair Archuleta suggested foregoing the reading of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Department Report in lieu of Colonel Joseph N. Smith, Director's absence and accept the report as written.

**New Business**

Election of Commission Officers

**Item's for Next Month's Agenda**

- Bob Hope Patriotic Hall – any official from the County to clarify law and space agreements
- VA Long Beach Healthcare System – Alice Martinez or a representative
- Veterans Administration Greater Los Angeles Healthcare Center – Ralph Tillman
- Commissioner Stephanie Stone will invite two Veterans for July's meeting to offer the Invocation and lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Good of the Order**

Commissioner Culmer; stated it's the 70th Anniversary of the first Marines arriving at Montford Point. First African – Americans to join the Marine Corps in 1942-1949 were segregated at Camp Lejeune. He was one of the last and closed the place down in June 1949. He's been writing his memoirs the last 17 years of his experience at Montford. The book will be filmed as a documentary with Morgan Freeman narrating.

Commissioner Rosmarin; stated the Jewish War Veteran convention will be held next week in Culver City. The National Commander, a Marine, will be visiting. Invites everyone to tour the Home.

Commissioner Stone; stated that TELACU that services the Latino community had a scholarship program in which they honored veterans. The Japanese-American soldiers are the American-born sons of parents who emigrated from Japan to the United States from Japan. In Japanese, they are called Nisei -- the second generation. Secretary Gravett awarded 40 Bronze Stars. As a Navy vet, she was happy to be able to be on the deck of the historic USS Iowa Battleship. The 887-foot long ship that carried President Franklin Roosevelt to the World War II summit with Churchill and Stalin to be anchored at the Port of Los Angeles Berth 87 San Pedro, CA

Chair Archuleta; "Thank you all! We have to spread the word and help our veterans. There are those that are eligible for VA benefits that aren't taken advantage of their right. In reference to the USS Iowa, I served on the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne and on July 7<sup>th</sup> in Pico Rivera we are taking our seniors on a tour of the USS Iowa.

As Mayor of Pico Rivera, we had a cake at the City Council meeting in honor of the Army's 237<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

Chair Archuleta adjourned meeting at 3:12 p.m.

Tatiana Rosas  
Executive Secretary  
June 13, 2012

Note: The next Commission meeting is scheduled to be held on Wednesday, July 11, 2012 at 1:30 p.m. in Suite 100 at the Department of Public Social Services site at 2615 S. Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA.